

## ABSTRACT

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

BROWN, KATHAYA D.

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AN EXPLORATORY STUDY: THE EFFECTIVENESS OF  
TRAINING AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT IN IMPROVING  
EMPLOYABILITY OUTCOMES

Advisor: Dr. Sarita Davis

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This evaluation examined the effectiveness of the Atlanta Urban League (AUL) Training and Workforce Development Program in assisting low-wage earners obtain quality employment after program completion. The AUL provides two training programs: Microsoft Office Specialist and Financial Services and Proof Encoding. Job quality was assessed according to family size as well as income after completing one the program. A secondary data analysis was the primary method to ensure accuracy of all data provided. Forty (40) participant case files from the fiscal year 2005 was randomly selection to use for the data source for this study. Descriptive and frequency data were used to address the evaluation question. In addition, the General System theory was used to demonstrate the degree to which the agency's systems are functioning as a whole to reach the common goal of employment. The findings of the evaluation are presented and their implications for the social work practice and policy are discussed.

AN EXPLORATORY STUDY: THE EFFECTIVENESS OF TRAINING AND  
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT IN IMPROVING EMPLOYABILITY OUTCOMES

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KATHAYA D. BROWN

WHITNEY M. YOUNG, JR. SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

This chapter explains the purpose of evaluating training programs for low-income participants. The statement of the problem details the impact of welfare reform on low-income wage earners, their families, and most importantly, the quality of the jobs obtained. The significance of this evaluation is explained with careful attention on the needs of low-income families' post- program training. Finally, the chapter concludes with a summary and overview of the remaining chapters.

#### Purpose of the Evaluation

This evaluation examines the effectiveness of the Atlanta Urban League's (AUL) Training and Workforce Development program in providing quality jobs after individuals have completed their training program. The training program provides clients with skills in Microsoft Office, financial services and proof encoding. After training has been completed, AUL assists clients in securing employment. According to Boushey (2001), most low incomes wages are between \$6.00 and \$8.00 per hour. These wages are insufficient in providing adequate care for families of the individuals earning this amount of money. A single parent with children requires over \$30,000 to afford the basic necessities of life (Boushey, 2001). This is more than double the federal poverty line (U.S. Health and Human Services, 2006). The evaluation of AUL training program



provides insight into how the program increases employment skills to obtain job. The ultimate goal is to provide enough income to adequately support their family.

### Background of the Problem

In August 1996, President Clinton signed into law the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA). With this act, he fulfilled the promise he made to end welfare as we know it (Miller, 1999). There were four goals of PRWORA: (1) move welfare recipients off of welfare quickly, (2) increase recipients' ability to be independent, (3) encourage the formation of two parent families, and (4) decrease out-of-wedlock pregnancies. The new law eliminated the individual federal entitlement to Aid to Families with Dependent Child (AFDC), Job Opportunities and Basic Skill (JOBS) training program, and Emergency Assistance and replaced them with the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) block grant to states. All states were mandated to fully implement TANF by July 1, 1997. The PRWORA required 50% of the state's single-parent families and 90% of two-parent families receiving assistance to work 30 hours a week by 2002. Lifetime welfare benefits were limited to five years but 20 % of the welfare recipients could be exempted as hardship cases (Hagen & Manley, 2002). Also, states required parents to work within two years or less of receiving assistance from TANF. The PRWORA has achieved many positive developments, such as decreasing welfare caseloads from 5.5% of the total U.S. population in 1994 to 2.1% in 2000 (Boushelly, 2001). Since the TANF program started, the welfare population decreased from 4 million to 1.9 million (Nasden, 2006).

The PRWORA required moving hundreds of thousands of people from welfare to work, which spurred thousands of job openings. In theory, when jobs were not available, local and state government would create community service jobs like cleaning public parks. Embedded in the logic of the legislation, many welfare recipients were poorly educated, had few job skills, and lacked the employment experience and discipline to maintain a schedule. Therefore, PRWORA forecasted that recipients may need extra assistance and training in obtaining and keeping employment (Bill of Rights in Action, 1998).

According to the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services (2006), the federal poverty guideline for a family of three was \$14,630 and only \$17,650 for two working parents with two children. A single mother with two children who worked full-time year-round at minimum wage of 5.15 per hour earned \$10,712 per year, which is 73% of Georgia poverty level (The 2005 Department of Community Health and Division of Health Planning Indigent Income Levels for Georgia, 2006). In Table 1, the 2005 annual income poverty level guidelines are as follows:

TABLE 1

*2005 Annual Income Level Poverty Guidelines for Georgia*

---

Size of Family Unit	48 Contiguous States and D.C
1	\$11,963
2	\$16,038
3	\$20,113
4	\$24,188

5	\$28,263
6	\$32,338
7	\$36,413
8	\$40,488
For each additional person add	\$4,075

---

For former welfare recipients, this meant that earnings between \$10,000 and \$14,000 annually were lower than the poverty level of \$13,133. This income level is significantly beneath the required amount for a family to purchase adequate housing, food, health care, childcare, and other basic necessities (Bernstein, Bethney, Boushely, & Chauna, 2001). Since families on welfare are mostly headed by single mothers, standards for evaluating welfare reform's success should be based upon these mothers ability to find and maintain stable employment that pays enough for them to provide a reasonable standard of living for their families (Boushey, 2001).

#### Background of the Program

The AUL was founded in 1920, under the director of Jesses O. Thomas (Training and Workforce Development, 2006). It was a significant part of the southern affiliate of the National Urban League (Henderson & Hornsby, 2006). From this point, the National Urban League leaders applied social work techniques to social and economic issues facing African-Americans in urban settings. They saw the importance of social work as a tool for improving the life opportunities of African-Americans moving from the rural south to urban centers in the north. By 1918, there were twenty-seven Urban Leagues affiliates established (Henderson & Hornsby, 2006).

In 2005, the Atlanta Urban League served more than 4,000 Georgians through their programs (Harper, 2006). The current mission of the League is to enable African-Americans to secure economic, self-reliant, parity, power, and civil rights. The aim of the AUL is to encourage, assist and engage in activities, which leads to improved opportunities for disadvantaged persons and families in Metropolitan Atlanta (Harper, 2006). The AUL offers programs and services to its clients including: employment services, housing counseling services, GED preparation, and digital music training (Harper, 2006).

The current evaluation focuses on the training program to assess its effectiveness to provide quality employment after finishing the training program. The Workforce Development and Training provides the strategies, tools and the necessary training to meet the challenge of the emerging workforce. The AUL training program focuses on Microsoft Office training (MOS) and Financial Service/ Proof Encoding training. After training, the program provides job placement assistance to graduates (Training and Workforce Development, 2006). The desired outcome is that AUL provide adequate employment training to ensure that clients obtain job skills, which will allow them sufficiently support, their families.

#### Statement of the Problem

The PRWORA moves welfare recipients out of the welfare system and into the workforce, but not beyond the reach of poverty. Previous evaluations primarily focus on assistance with job placement (Anderson, Gryzlak, & Halter, 2004; Barusch, & Taylor, 2004); Cone, Filinson, & Ray, 2005; Lens, 2002). In the job placement process, agencies

help clients find employment, which fulfills the requirements of the Act, but agencies do not take into consideration if the clients are earning enough money to sufficiently support their families. According to previous research, the number of women leaving welfare is generally high, ranging from 50% to 70%, which varies by state (Acs & Loprest, 2001). In September 2001, there were 5.3 million recipients of TANF, which represented a 63% drop in welfare recipients.

Martinson and Strawn (2000) focused on two key challenges that both state and local entities identified as important for the long-term success of welfare reform and workforce development efforts which included: (1) to help low-income parents sustain employment and (2) advance in the workforce. These goals emphasized helping low-income parents advance to better jobs, as defined by those with higher pay, employer-provided benefits, regular hours, and/or full-time status. According to Martinson and Strawn (2000), there is little rigorous research on what the best strategies are for achieving these goals. The authors found a 1% annual increase for wages among women who left welfare (Martinson & Strawn, 2000). The study also mentions that programs assisting women with good working history strategically move to better paying jobs with somewhat better annual wage increases.

Additionally, it is perceived that women, who have access to postsecondary education and training, will receive somewhat better increases in annual pay over time. Even with the wage increases of 4% and 5% a year, this still leaves the majority of the families in poverty or very close to the poverty level. The AUL provides training to improve employment skills and to ensure clients will find a job. However, there is no

evidence that after finishing training programs, low-income households, which are welfare recipients, will find quality jobs in which to support their families. The proposed study begins by reviewing what is known about the work experiences of low-income parents, by drawing upon available research and program experience that identify policies and practices that may promote steady work and access to better employment.

### Significance of the Evaluation

The AUL provides training program to improve employability skills. According to previous literature, welfare recipients are quickly placed in jobs to comply with the PRWORA; however, there is little consideration of the viability of the income to support their families (Boushey, 2001). This evaluation assumes that the training program should not just focus on employment, but also enable clients to work full time in order to escape poverty (Roger, 2003). By providing emphasis on the quality of jobs that clients are receiving, improvements will be made in regards to the quality of life of individuals supporting their families. The information provided through this evaluation will assist the AUL with informing their job placement assistance component of the program and the types of training they are provided. This information will be useful in developing informed integrated strategies with the potential of improving employability outcomes for participants. Also, the AUL will have a method of observing the quality of jobs that clients are obtaining.

## Summary

The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) impacted the welfare system by placing the welfare recipients in the position to function independently from the system, which provides assistance to take care of their families. A review of empirical literature is discussed in Chapter Two, which includes the history of welfare reform, defining quality jobs and reviewing employment services evaluations. The methodologies used in conducting this program evaluation are explained in Chapter Three. The findings are revealed in Chapter Four, and the results are discussed in the context of the literature in Chapter Five. Finally, Chapter Six concludes with a discussion of the implications to social work practice.

## CHAPTER TWO

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This chapter provides a detailed review of the literature through empirical studies, conceptual research, employment data and defining quality jobs. An overview of the history of welfare reform and how it impacted the welfare recipients is also discussed. The review outlines employment services and how they are currently evaluated for the low-income population, as well as the programs strengths and limitations. The Afrocentric perspective is illustrated as well as the conceptual framework. Lastly, the proposed study will be presented.

#### The History of Welfare Reform

President Johnson's War on Poverty failed to reduce welfare dependence. As a part of the Social Security Act, the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program was formed in 1935. This act allowed single mothers, usually widows at that time, to stay at home and take care of their children rather than being forced to enter the labor force. Since the creation of the AFDC program, there have been some vital changes which have occurred in society. There has been a change in marital status, including numbers of mothers who were divorced, separated, or were never married. The participation of women and mothers in the labor force has been accepted and expected.



In addition, the composition of the welfare caseload changed, with the majority of recipients not being widowed, but rather being divorced, separated, and never-married mothers (Blank & Wallace, 1999). From 1965 to 1994, AFDC caseload was steadily increasing, reaching as high as 5 million families on the welfare rolls. Because prolonged welfare dependence had negative effects on the development of children, welfare reform was intended to disrupt inter-generational dependence by moving families off the welfare rolls through increased work and marriage (Kim & Rector, 2006).

In 1996, the PRWORA replaced the failed social program AFDC with a block grant program, which was Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF). The new act has three goals which included: (1) to reduce welfare dependence and increase employment; (2) to reduce child poverty; and (3) to reduce out of wedlock childbearing and strengthen marriages (Kim & Rector, 2006). This new act also changed the structure of income for poor families in the United States, including eliminating entitlement of cash public assistance, placing mandatory work requirements and time limit on the receipt of cash public assistance, and the inclusion of family formation issues, such as the reduction of non-marital birth and the promotion of marriage the among welfare system's primary goals (Peterson, 2002).

According to Caraley (2002), of the people who left the New Jersey welfare system after 1997, only one-third were able to obtain work and support themselves for a year after their public assistance ended. Two-thirds of the individuals remained below the federal poverty level, lost their homes, which forced them to move in with friends or family, or to seek emergency housing in homeless shelters. As many as 27 % of New

Jersey's recipients left welfare without finding employment and could barely sustain on what little they could get from other government subsidy programs such as food stamps and unemployment compensation. Caraley (2002) also states there are three outcomes for individuals leaving welfare.

First, there have been some functional individuals who were jolted out of their complacency or laziness and received normal employment. Second, there is another larger population who has been able to obtain low-paying, low-skill jobs and temporarily leave welfare, often at great risk to their children's development. Third, there is a group that has not been able to find and maintain employment and with limits on cash assistance. These individuals are now deeper in poverty than ever. Between 1993 and 1995, the economic situation of families headed by single women generally improved. By 1997, the poorest 20% of these families experienced a decrease in income by an average of \$577 a year. The decrease in income leaves them with an average annual income of \$8,047.28. This group represents families who purged off of welfare, but could not earn a living wage.

Burke (2000a) compiled the results of studies in several states on the hourly wage of TANF recipients. It was reported that the quarterly median earnings of former TANF recipients in Maryland increased 21%, from \$2,100 in the first quarter after they left TANF to \$2,556 in the ninth quarter. And, the average hourly wage of former TANF recipients in South Carolina was \$7 in the sixth quarter after they exited TANF. Burke (2000a) also reported similar average hourly wages of single-parent families in other states in 1997 and 1998 which included: \$8.42 and 8.09 for former TANF recipients in

two surveys in Washington; \$7.41 for those in Wisconsin; and \$6.00 to 6.99 for those in Florida. According to the Urban Institute findings, 41% of TANF leavers were still poor even after accounting for the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and the cash value of food stamps, minus payroll taxes (Lorpest, 2001). According to Grogger (2001), the trend in income to female-headed families showed that time constraints has no major effect on earnings or income. For example, they did not result in an increase in earnings or income for these families. Grogger (2001) argued that, under great pressure to leave welfare, TANF leavers could not secure stable jobs with adequate wages. Based on a comprehensive review of the literature, Hotz, Mullin, and Scholz (2002) concluded that TANF leavers with low skills could not expect to find employment, which provides an increase in their salary to take care of their family.

In a previous study by Lens (2002), it was reported by individual states tracking former recipients that remain in low paying jobs which do not provide enough money to sustain them. In Oklahoma, more than half of former recipients have incomes at or below poverty level (Oklahoma Department of Human Services, 1999). In New Jersey, two-thirds of former recipients remained mired in poverty after leaving the welfare rolls, with one-half experiencing severe hardship. Only one-third of former recipients had incomes above the poverty line (Rangarajan & Wood, 1999).

In a study by Anderson, Gryslak, and Halter (2004), all the participants worked after leaving TANF, and employment played an important role in most TANF exits. The employment they found paid low wages and often did not last long. Generally, if any savings were obtained and lost of benefits, the costs of job loss for these women were

higher than immediate the gain. Even when women did not lose their jobs involuntarily, wage levels sometimes resulted in returns to TANF. Low wages led some to compare their economic status before and after leaving public assistance. When these comparisons were evaluated, participants concluded that employment did not increase economic well-being. Participants recognized that having poor job skills or limited experience contributed to their low pay. Many question the work-first idea of placing recipients in the first available job, because this has resulted in job placement that was insufficient to remain off TANF. Several focus group members said TANF instead should provide more extensive skills training and education and develop linkages to better jobs (Anderson, Gryslak, and Halter, 2004).

The PRWORA had an impact on welfare reform. PRWORA required TANF recipients to obtain a job. The TANF work-first approach may have pushed people into jobs but not necessarily into self-sufficiency (Lens, 2002). According to previous studies, the main issue recipient's encountered was low wages; therefore, recipients struggle to escape poverty. Instead, work-first training programs of need to be addressed in order for recipients to receive appropriate training to increase employability (Lens, 2002).

#### Quality Jobs for Welfare Recipients

One of the requirements of the PRWORA is for welfare recipients to obtain a job that encourages independence. Welfare-to-work programs can bring dramatic changes in participants' lives, but even with these changes, there is no guarantee that improvement in quality of life will occur. For example, public assistance recipients who leave welfare for work could lose income and experience increased stress, while their children may

receive less care and supervision. However, such programs might set in motion a series of events leading participants to positive outcomes such as economic self-sufficiency (Foley & Schwartz, 2004). Corcoran and Johnson (2003) defines a quality job as one that is fulltime (at least 35 hours a week), which pays \$7.00 per hour with health benefits, or a minimum of \$8.50 per hour without health benefits.

Foley and Schwartz (2004) conducted a Self-Sufficiency Project (SSP), which studied the relationship between welfare including wages, hours, job duration, the receipt of employer-sponsored benefits, and union membership. The study also revealed four job characteristics that could consider positive indicators of job quality, and estimated the impact SSP had on employment in jobs with theses characteristic. The study suggests that job quality has three sufficient components including: (1) job quality might be assessed by the nature of the work and the work environment, (2) job quality can also be related to future job prospects and, (3) job quality arises from the compensation, whether cash or in-kind, that workers receive for their labor.

The SSP was a random assignment demonstration project that tested the effect of generous financial incentives on the behavior of long-term social assistance recipients in New Brunswick and British Columbia. The sample consisted of long-term welfare recipients, including all respondents to the SSP 36-month follow-up survey. Of the 5,729 individuals that were randomly assigned, 4,961 completed the 36-month follow-up survey with 2,503 in the program group and 2,458 in the control group. The result of the study suggests there are some aspects of job quality that can be improved by interventions directly targeting jobs with particular characteristics. The study identified 4

positive job characteristics, which are: (1) at least on employer-sponsored benefits, (2) hourly wage high enough for a full time year worker to earn the equivalent of the Low-Income Cut-Off, (3) full time and (4) job duration at least 6 months. SSP increased employment in full-time jobs because the financial incentive was structured to reward only that kind of work. If other job characteristics were identified as positive, interventions may find success by targeting those types of jobs (Foley & Schwartz, 2004).

Barcus and Robbins (2004) completed a study to examine whether low-income families gained greater employment and housing capacity following welfare reform. In this study, it is argued that poverty rates and caseload reductions are not adequate measurements of welfare reform success because they fail to account for economy, housing, and employment adequacy. Caseload reduction indicates the number of families that leave welfare but fail to address qualitative life changes faced by low-income families.

According to Crowley and Lichter (2002), the primary measures of PRWORA success are declining poverty rates and caseloads, but they fail to adequately measure the economic and housing capacity of low-income populations. The poverty level underestimates the proportion of families likely to have trouble meeting their basic needs. Minimum wage is not sufficient to pay rent on a two bedroom apartment in most urban settings. The findings reveal even with a strong economy, more stringent welfare rules are related positively to success in employment and housing but not quality of life. Residential location in a metro area emerges as an important component of housing and

economic capacity for respondents at or below the poverty level. Those receiving public assistance remain economically and socially vulnerable despite welfare rules designed to enhanced success and improve their status.

### Evaluations of Employment Service Programs

Evaluating employment programs is essential to provide proper information to improve services and training. Employment and vocational services are services, which provide job training, placement, and readiness skill as well as career counseling.

Employment services are designed to assist low-income populations whereas vocational services are designed to assist individuals with mental illness or those that are developmentally disabled. For the purpose of this study, the focus is on employment services to low-income recipients and the programs that are implemented to address welfare-to-work.

In a study by Barusch and Taylor (2004), the authors reported personal barriers to self-sufficiency, including physical health problems, domestic violence, and educational deficits to self-sufficiency, substance abuse, learning disabilities, child behavior problems, generalized anxiety disorder, posttraumatic stress disorder, and clinical depression. There were 284 long-term recipients participating in the study. The study found multiple barriers to employment including mental health, learning disability, education, work history, physical health problems, child physical or mental health problems, domestic violence, drug abuse, alcohol abuse, child behavior problems, and child protective service referral. Most recipients reported experiencing a minimum of three barriers.

Bloom, Hill, and Riccio, (2003) reported how implementation influences the effectiveness of mandatory welfare-to-work program. In this study, they emphasized six areas including: (1) quick job entry for clients, (2) emphasis on personalized client attention, (3) closeness of client monitoring, (4) staff caseload size, (5) staff disagreement, and (6) frontline staff and supervisor disagreement. The results stated that management choices for how welfare-to-work program are implemented makes a great difference in success of the programs. The authors recommended using strong employment message as a powerful medium for stimulating clients to find jobs, a clear staff focus on personal client attention can markedly increase their success, and large client caseloads can undercut program effectiveness. Increased reliance on mandatory basic education reduces short-run program effectiveness; thus, programs that directly emphasize employment are more successful in the short run. The local economic environment is a major determinant of program success in that programs are much less effective when jobs are limited. Welfare-to-work programs can be effective for many different types of clients, especially by targeting clients who are job ready. Overall, the way that programs are implemented has much more influence on its effectiveness than the types of clients served (Bloom, Hill, & Riccio, 2003).

In a longitudinal study completed by Lavitt and Waldron (2000), the success of communication intensive job training programs serving 101 largely indigent clients in urban areas was examined. Four research questions and one hypothesis were addressed. The research questions included: (1) does interpersonal competence, as measured by the Conversational Skill Rating Scale (CSRS), predict employment outcomes in welfare-to



work job training? (2) Do clients improve interpersonal competence, as measured by the CSRS, after they participate in a Welfare-to-Work job-training program? (3) Does interview preparedness, as measured by the quality and quantity of employment interview plans, predict employment outcomes in a welfare-to-work job training program? (4) Does interview preparedness, as measured by the quality and quantify of employment interview plans, improve after participate in a welfare-to work training program? The hypothesis for this study was: (H1) The amount of social support by clients will be positively associated with program completion and employment success. The sample size included 101 students as they enrolled and exited the program over a year long period. The students were primarily female, with an average of age 34, and a 10<sup>th</sup> grade educational level. The study measures include the Conversational Skill Rating Scale, Interview planning measures; one segment of the initial interview required the client role-play a hypothetical job interview. In addition, it measured social support and client estimates of the amount of support and encouragement they received for their job training effort from live-in relationships, extended family, and others. Follow-up telephone interviews of 5-10 minutes were conducted 60-90 days after clients left the program. The results of this study suggest that communication factors played significant role in accounting for client outcomes in this welfare-to-work program. Moreover, it appears that the program had a significant impact on partner assessed communication competence and preparedness for employment interviews. However, the varied outcomes experienced by clients underscored the complexity of the transition from government assistance to

full-time self-support. Prevailing assumptions about the importance of communication in this process may oversimplify its role in facilitating success.

Another study was conducted on three welfare-to-work programs in three populous states including: California's Greater Avenues for Independence (GAIN), New York's Child assistance Program (CAP), and Florida's Project. The GAIN program strongly emphasized getting welfare recipients into any job as quickly as possible and use sanctions like reduction in welfare benefits to help ensure that recipients sought and accepted available jobs. The goal of Project Independence was to keep program costs as low as possible. Most participants were assigned to a relatively inexpensive job ready track in which they were required to apply for a job with at least 12 employers. Finally, CAP was a voluntary program that relied on financial incentives to encourage recipients to obtain child support court orders and work. An interview process of 93 participants in mid- to upper- level administrator position within state welfare agencies were used for the sample. The study asked the administrators about familiarity with evaluations, specific instances of utilization in decision-making processes, agenda setting processes, and how welfare policy would differ between states.

The findings state the experiment did a play role in policy making in states other than those in which the study was conducted. The roles were of some importance, but not critical and perhaps different from what many evaluators anticipated. The findings also suggest evidence that GAIN and CAP nonetheless played some role in deliberations in many states. Of the 93 respondents, 43 were represented. At least one respondent from each of the 30 different states recalled that GAIN was specifically mentioned at the time

their state was considering moving their program toward a labor attachment model. Although findings from the experiments were used in a wide variety of ways, in no instance were estimates of the effects of the tested programs decisive in the decision to adopt or not to adopt a tested policy (Greenberg, Mandell & Onstott, 2000).

The studies previously mentioned regarding employment services provide information on different techniques for evaluations. These evaluations had little information on implementing training programs for recipients to obtain a quality job. The studies focus on work first approaches to obtain jobs; therefore, the quality of the job is not addressed in previous literature on escaping poverty.

#### Limitations of the Literature

The literature is replete with information as it pertains to program efficacy employment services and the job quality a person needs to adequately provide for their family. According to previous studies, PRWORA had a tremendous impact on the welfare system. TANF recipients are now required to obtain a job in order to become independent (Lens, 2004). The success of TANF is generally measured in the literature by reducing welfare caseloads. While most employment services provide job placement assistance, they do not always help participants escape poverty. The literature also concludes that TANF recipients obtain jobs, but there is little evidence as to the quality of these jobs or quality of life experienced by the individuals or their families. The literature does, however, report some barriers that prevent recipients from obtaining quality jobs. It does not expound on the actual job the recipient has obtained (Anderson, Gryzlar, & Halter, 2004).

Finally, the literature is silent on the types of training programs needed to improve employment skills. Instead, most research on welfare-to-work programs focus on how quickly recipients find jobs, not on the quality of jobs they obtain or their ability to sustain their families as a result of the training (Bloom, Hill, & Riccio, 2003). In summary, the literature puts little emphasis on the macro level explanations that have contributed to the culture of poverty and the continued need to address structural unemployment and underemployment. The section below, outlines the historical experience of African-Americans as it relates to employment, geo/political factors that perpetuate unemployment and underemployment, and identifies culturally relevant questions that expand the inquiry as it relates to the evaluation question.

#### Afrocentric Perspective

Slavery's destruction made possible the creation of mass organization and political mobilization by the South's African American population. Former slaves sought personal autonomy, education, religious freedom, and the reconstruction of families broken up during slavery, civic equality, and political rights. Republican leaders looked toward remolding southern societies' image in the North, which to them meant, replacing slave labor with wage labor.

White landowners, their representatives, and their allies quickly made it clear that free labor had no place in their own plans for the African American population. The white southern electorate created state government in late 1865 and 1866. Those governments, boasting prominent leaders of the Confederacy, quickly passed laws designed to re-impose upon the free people obligations, burdens, and restrictions redolent

of slavery. African-Americans were unwilling to give up the fruits of their hard won victory. This aroused and mobilized southern African-Americans once more pointing forward the Republicans party, which set out to alter and redefine the electorate primarily by enfranchising former slaves. The difficulties of achieving a relatively limited goal required pursuing a more radical one (Levine, 2006).

According to Budros, (2004), southern plantation slavery was intertwined with the regional economy in which cheap, exploited labor was used to produce commercial agricultural goods. Planters required perfecting the exploitative system in order to enhance their profits and their standard of living. They dominated the state legislature and passed Draconian codes that circumscribed slave life greatly and deprived free African-Americans right of citizenship. The resulting system of social stratification unmistakably established the dominance of the master and the subservience of the slave. The social system was reinforced by ideologies of exploitation therefore cultural racism, which is the social definition of chattels as uncivilized heathens were used to justify the slaveocracy. Later on biological racism, the notion that African-Americans are biologically inferior to whites, was used to rationalize slavery. Benefiting economically from plantation agriculture, monopolizing power and privilege, and steeped in the culture of white racism, slave owners and aspiring slave owners tremendously supported the slave based plantation economy.

On July 1, 1965 (Harrison, 2006), the Bureau of Refugees, Freedman, and Abandoned Lands (Freedmen's Bureau) opened their door in response to the unemployment, overcrowding, and poverty that confronted African-Americans in the

nation's capital. One of the principal themes of the new Freedman's Bureau was to apply northern free labor principles to the very different and economic conditions of the rural south. The bureau confronted an economy already familiar to the operation of a free market in which it had to find a place for freed workers only recently transplanted from plantation slavery. Rather than seeking to reconstitute the labor market, it served to prepare free people to participate in a market that was already established, which involved inculcating a value of industriousness, frugality, and regularity. The bureau agents also encountered mass unemployment and severe overcrowding resulting from a mass migration of African-Americans, which in its relative scale anticipated the larger migrations of the twentieth century. These conditions forced them to consider new approaches to sanitation, housing, and employment (Harrison, 2006).

The way the system was set up during slavery, brought about a holding pattern for the way the African-Americans conceptualized work and wages, hence designing an infrastructure which handicapped the training of African-American people. This infrastructure has been passed down to the descendants of African American people and has influenced a new way of dealing with unemployment and the workforce. Today, African-Americans are believed to be doing jobs, which pay less than minimum wage, have inadequate training, a high turnover. Some researchers see this as a continuous cycle forcing individuals to remain on welfare, accept low wages and remain in a permanent underclass (Cherry, 2001). Figure 1 displays an Afrocentric Perspective to employment for African-Americans. African-Americans face the issues of receiving low wages, lack of training, to institutional racism, and unwanted jobs. These barriers prohibit African-

Americans from receiving quality jobs that adequately support their family and improve their environmental condition.

The socioeconomic system during slavery created an infrastructure, which handicapped the training and wage earning capacity for people of African descent in North America. This infrastructure has impacted the descendants of former enslaved Africans and in the form of high underemployment and unemployment rates throughout the nations urban areas. Today, African-Americans are performing jobs which pay less than minimum wage, have inadequate training within those jobs and do not remain in those positions for long, contributing to high turnover rates. Some researchers see this as a continuous cycle forcing individuals to remain on welfare, accept low wages and remain in a permanent underclass (Cherry, 2001). Figure 1 illustrates how this historical pattern occurs at the macro and mezzo levels in our society today.

According to the figure below, macro system factors such as institutional racism, conservative workforce policies, non-competitive job training, and underclass employment are reciprocal societal factors that create atmosphere of underemployment in the black community. The macro factors foster community-level barriers such as insufficient community resources, poverty programs, and ultimately, insufficient income/ wages to support black families. These spheres of influence, cultivated since slavery, coalesce to keep the African-Americans underemployed and unemployed in North America today.

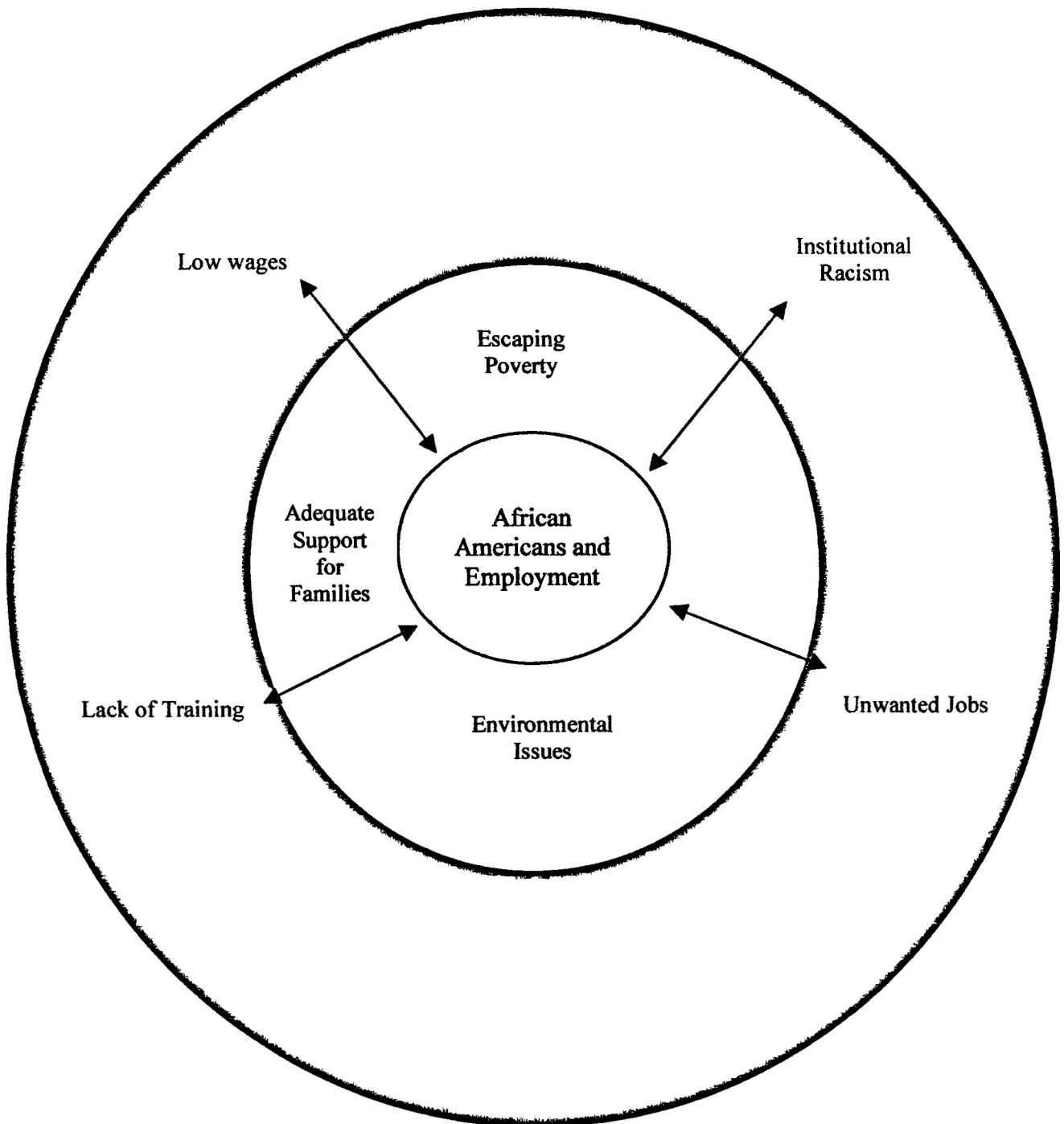


FIGURE 1. Afrocentric Perspective to employment for African-Americans.



The AUL realizes these barriers co-exist in society for African-Americans. When African-Americans completed the training program the obstacles of low wages, unwanted jobs, lack of training and institutional racism is sufficiently reduced. Therefore, the AUL training program provides training to African-Americans to ensure they getting the same opportunity to succeed in the workforce.

### Conceptual Framework

Chess, Dale, Norlin, and Smith (2006) describe the General Systems Theory (GST) as the theory of order. The founder of this theory was the theoretical biologist, Ludwig von Bertalanffy (1901-1972). He was born and educated in Austria and was unhappy with the inability of linear based, cause-and-effect theories to illustrate the growth and change he saw in living organisms. He searched for understanding, which focused on the order among the parts, not the parts individually. The GST focuses on wholeness and causality in interaction; therefore, this is a way of viewing human behavior that emphasizes the person and his or her total situation. The assumption is that an organization when viewed as a whole is greater than sum of its parts. For example, the family is a system that cannot be understood without understanding the individuals within the family.

There are 8 key concepts to the GST which include: (1) Emergence or the emergent properties relates to those parts comprising the whole and properties emerging from the relationship between the parts; (2) Open system suggests that an ongoing exchange exists between the subject system and its environment: whereas a closed system has no ongoing exchange; (3) The function of a boundary is to distinguish the system

from its environment and to protect the parts from influence in the environment that might disrupt functioning. The boundaries are permeable, allowing input and output exchanges with the environment; (4) Interface refers to a shared boundary with another system and this connection allows the system to communicate; (5) Suprasystem is a larger system of which the subject system is apart. It is a part of your system social environment. The suprasystem includes all the other systems with which your subject system has an interface with which it is functionally linked; (6) Entrop is a measure of disorder, which refers to the process in which order is lost, process of disorganization; (7) Negative Entropy refers to the increase in ordering. In the process of ordering, the most Steady State is the health and well being of a system. This concept looks at the balances input and output exchange between the system and the suprasystem. Within this concept, it has a favorable balance, which refers to the balance in favor of negative entropic forces promoting and increasing order (Chess, Dale, Norlin, & Smith, 2006). Evident and all forms of organization possess the potential for growth and development; and (8) Steady State is the health and well being of a system. Figure 2 displays the conceptualization of GST as it applies to employment and the Atlanta Urban League.

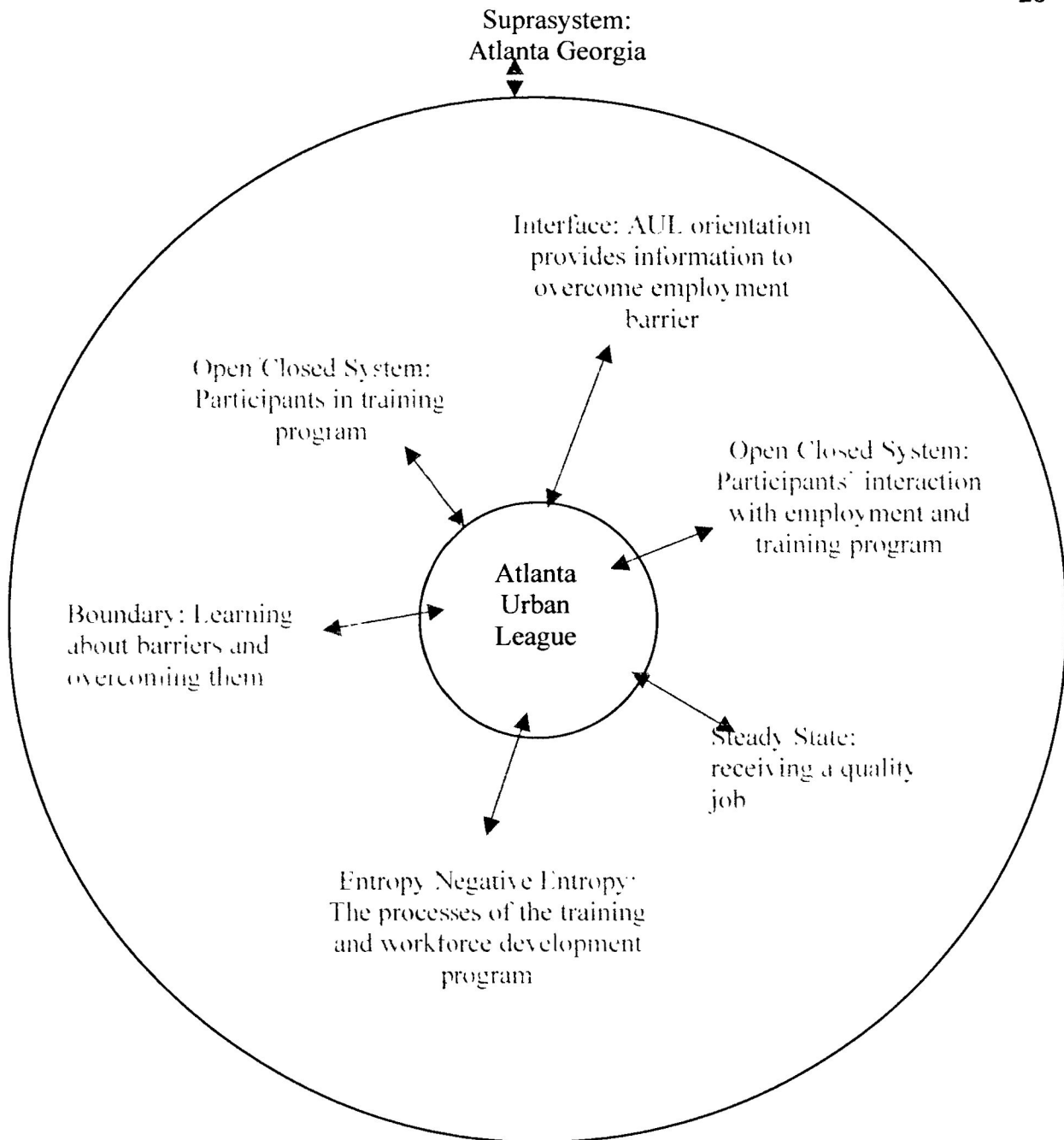


FIGURE 2. Displays the conceptualization of the General System Theory.

### Proposed Evaluation

The proposed evaluation examines the effectiveness of the Atlanta Urban League (AUL), Training and Workforce Development program in increasing employability among low-income clients in order to obtain quality jobs to adequately support their family. The 1996 PRWORA requires TANF recipients obtain jobs in order to be self-sufficient. In the process of attempting to become self-sufficient, the recipients are not escaping poverty. The evaluation observes the two concentration-training programs to examine whether clients obtain quality jobs. A quality job evaluation tool is used to collect data to assess the program. The evaluation question is: “Does the AUL, Training and Workforce Development program increase employability?” Figure 3 is a Logic Model representing the increasing of employment skills to obtain a quality. When participants enter the AUL training program, they have the choice of two concentrations, Microsoft Office Specialist or Financial Services Proof Encoding. Completing one of these two concentrations allows the participants to increase their employment skills, therefore providing the greatest opportunity to receive quality jobs. After completing one of these programs, the expected outcome is to obtain a quality job.

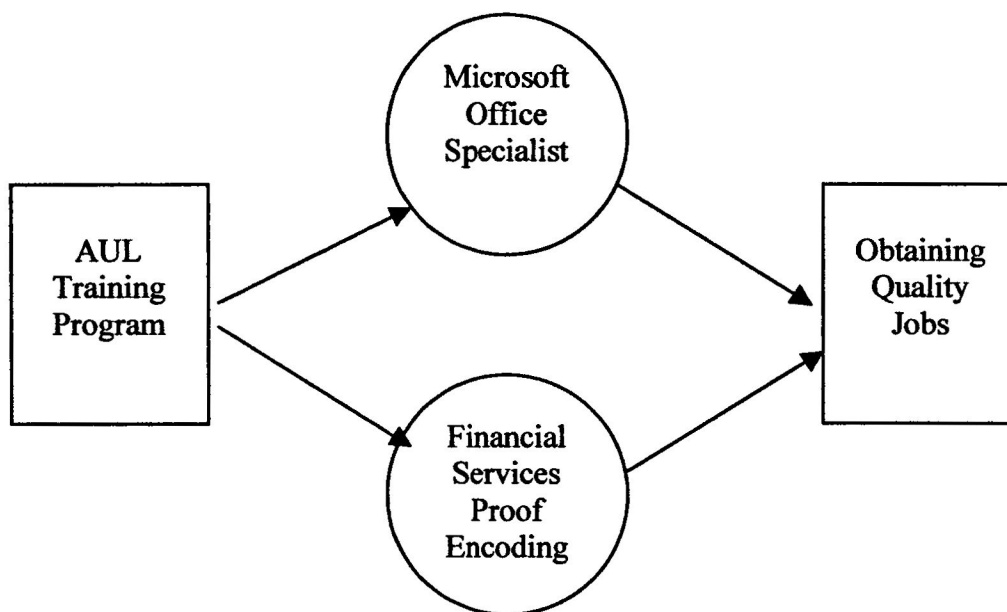


FIGURE 3. Logic Model of Atlanta Urban League training program illustrates the two training programs that the AUL offers.

### Summary

A thorough literature review and conceptual framework is valuable to this program evaluation. The literature review informs the evaluation of the employment services and how it is currently framed for low-income populations. It also reveals how the PRWORA impacted the welfare system and how quality jobs are not being obtained to adequately to escape poverty. The Afrocentric perspective illustrated how African-Americans are oppressed in today's society and limited within the workforce. The methodology for conducting this evaluation is demonstrated in Chapter three.

## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODOLOGY

This chapter details the methodologies to be used in conducting this program evaluation. The methodologies components for this evaluation include sample, measure, procedures, and statistical analysis are displayed.

#### Sample

The sample for this evaluation consisted of 40 randomly selected low-income participants who completed the Atlanta Urban League Training and Workforce development program in 2005. The Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Clark Atlanta University approved the collection of data from the Atlanta Urban League (see Appendix A). Further, a site approval letter (see Appendix B) was signed by the agency granting permission to conduct the evaluation. The training provided by the Atlanta Urban League consists of Microsoft Office and Financial Services and Proof Encoding and participants are required to finish one of the trainings. All participants' case documents were anonymous by assigning each case file with a numeric value. The low-income participants displayed income below the poverty level according to the size of the family. Only families with two or more members were selected to participate in the evaluation. Table 2 displays the demographics collected from the sample for this study.

TABLE 2

*Demographic of Sample (N=40)*

VARIABLE	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
<b>REFERRED/WALK-IN</b>		
Walk-in	29	72.5%
Referred	11	27.5%
<b>ELIGIBILITY</b>		
High School Diploma	37	92%
GED	3	7.5%
<b>AGE</b>		
18-29	13	32.5%
30-39	10	25%
40-49	12	30%
50-59	4	10%
60-69	1	2.5%
<b>ETHNICITY</b>		
African-Americans	39	97.5%
Asian	1	2.5%
Hispanic	0	0%
Caucasian	0	0%
Other	0	0%
<b>GENDER</b>		
Female	37	92.5%
Male	3	7.5%

**EDUCATION**

Some School	2	5%
High School	33	82.5%
Bachelors	5	12.5%
Masters	0	0%
PHD	0	0%
Trainings	0	0%

**FAMILY SIZE**

2	20	50%
3	11	27.5%
4	7	17.5%
5	1	2.5%
6	1	2.5%
7	0	0%
8	0	0%
9	0	0%
More than 10	0	0%

---

There were 29 walk-in participants and 11 participants referred to the agency by an outside source. All the participants were eligible through education which included: 92% (37) with a high school diploma and 7.5% (3) with a GED. The average age of the sample was 35 years old. A total of 39 participants were African-Americans and only one Asian participant. The gender of the sample included 37 females and 3 males. Participants' educational level indicated that 5% (2) had some high school, 82.5% (33)



had a high school diploma, and 12.5% (5) had a Bachelors degree. The average family size for the sample consisted of 2 members.

### Measure

A Quality Job Evaluation Tool (see Appendix C) was used to collect data for this evaluation. The evaluation tool includes various demographics variables such as ethnicity, income, family size, marital status, gender, age, education, as well as the month the participant completed the program, and whether the participant successfully completed the program.

According to Boushey (2001), single parents generally head TANF recipients and low-income families; therefore, this study has the same criteria for families. A quality job is determined according to family size and income as displayed in Table 2. Boushey (2001) states a single family of three needs \$30,000 to provide the basic needs of the family. In order to provide the income levels for quality jobs, \$4,075 was added or subtracted for each person per family. Therefore, in order to acquire the quality job measure criteria \$4,075 was added or subtracted from \$30,000. Table 3 below displays the quality job income by family size.

TABLE 3

#### *Quality Job Measure Criteria*

---

Size of Family Unit	Quality Job Income
1	\$21,850
2	\$25,925
3	\$30,000

4	\$34,075
5	\$38,150
6	\$42,225
7	\$46,300
8	\$50,375
For each additional person add	\$4,075

---

In order to measure the concept of a quality job, the program looks at the amount of income the individual earns, which is reported after the training program is completed. The intervention is represented as the AUL training program. The training program consists of two distinct training models. Microsoft Office Specialist is a 16-week program, which consists of intensive instruction on the use of the computer with emphasis on obtaining an industry recognized certificate at the Specialist, Expert or Master level in each Microsoft Office applications: The applications include: Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Access. The second training model is the Financial Services and Proof Encoding, which is a 12-week program consisting of Ten-Key Touch, Customer Service, Proof Operations and Microsoft Word (Training and Workforce Development Training bulletin, 2006).

The level of measurement is nominal since the demographic and categorical data has no distinct value. A secondary data analysis will be used as the data source from AUL client profile chart. To address reliability, there was duplicated questions relating to the depend variables.

### Design

The design for this evaluation will be XO, with X representing the AUL training program and O representing the measure of quality jobs the participants obtain after finishing the training program. There are internal validity threats that relate to this program evaluation, including the different conceptualization of the definition of quality jobs. The AUL may have a different conceptualization of what is a quality job is; therefore, this may impact the outcome of the evaluation through what information is gathered and how it is interpreted. Another internal validity threat is the documentation of client's information. If the caseworker is not detailed enough or if documentation is missing from the file, this will influence the outcome of the evaluation. In this evaluation, there is no risk to the low-income population.

### Procedures

The evaluation of Atlanta Urban League Training and Workforce Development program was conducted in November 2006. The Master of Social Work student visited the site every week until data from 40 case files was documented. To ensure confidentiality, all case files were reviewed on the agency premises in a private room. The MSW student randomly selected 40 participants through the 2005 client files that completed the training program and met the poverty level criteria. After selection, the student documented the Job Quality Evaluation Tool to obtain the additional information from the client files in order to complete the evaluation. The identity of the participants were blocked out and replaced with unique alphanumeric identifiers to ensure privacy.

### Statistical Analysis

The data collected from 40 participants were analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) v.11. The Quality Job Evaluation tool is measure on a nominal level for this evaluation. Logistic Regression is the statistical test used to determine AUL training program increase opportunity to obtaining a quality job. The Logistic Regression is used for analyzing when the prediction is based upon the measurements of one or more predictor variables (Grinnell & Weinbach, 2004).

### Summary

The key components for the methodologies were demonstrated for this program evaluation of receiving a quality job after finishing the Atlanta Urban League Training and Workforce development program. The sample is 40 case files randomly select from low-income population according to the poverty guidelines through family size. By auditing the client files from year 2005, this evaluation will be able to assess the impact of the AUL workforce development program. Consequently, as a result of the analysis, AUL will be able to inform their client assessment, intake, monitoring, and outcome indicators.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

This chapter discusses the findings from this study along with the demographics information from the sample. The client assessment, which was collected, will also be displayed. The results of the data collected showed there was insufficient data to provide adequate results to evaluate the Atlanta Urban League Training and Workforce Development Program.

#### Client Assessment

Participants provided a client assessment, which addresses the conceptual framework as it relates to the questions towards the system theory. There were 3 (7.5%) participants, which had no income data. Two hundred and thirty eight dollars was the average yearly income from the participants, which were employed. The Atlanta Urban League did not collect previous skill level on participants for their Microsoft Office Specialist and Financial Services and Proof Encoding. Approximately 55% (22) of participants identified as being in the MOUSE program was 55%, while 42% (17) were in the FSPE program. For one participant there was no record of which training program he/she attended. The yearly program ran from January to December with the highest completion month being February. There were 15% (6) of participants that did not complete the training program. Five percent (2) of the participants received special

recognition. This occurs when the participants receives a job before competing the program. Table 4 displays the numbers and percentages of the client assessment data.

TABLE 4

*Client Assessment of Sample (N=40)*


---

VARIABLE	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
INCOME AT TIME OF INTAKE		
\$0	25	62.5%
\$1-400	4	10.0%
\$401-800	3	7.5%
\$801-1200	3	7.5%
\$1201-1600	2	5.0%
Missing Data	3	7.5%
PREVIOUS SKILL LEVEL FOR MICROSOFT OFFICE SPECIALIST		
None	0	0%
Low Skill Level	0	0%
Moderate Skill Level	0	0%
High Skill Level	0	0%
Missing Data	40	100%
PREVIOUS SKILL LEVEL FOR FINANCIAL SERVICES AND PROOF ENCODING		
None	0	0%
Low Skill Level	0	0%
Moderate Skill Level	0	0%
High Skill Level	0	0%

Missing Data	40	100%
<b>WHICH PROGRAM COMPLETED</b>		
MOUSE	22	55.0%
FSPE	17	42.0%
Missing Data	1	2.55%
<b>MONTH OF COMPLETION</b>		
January-April	11	27.0%
May-August	12	30.0%
September-December	9	18.0%
Did Not Complete	6	15.0%
Special Recognition	2	5.0%

The Afrocentric perspective question was addressed in orientation, which is done before participants enter the program. The Atlanta Urban Leagues informs the participants on potential barriers to employment. Potentials barriers, such as lack of training, institutional racism, low wages and unwanted jobs can decrease their chance of obtaining quality job. The item level analysis (see Appendix D) shows the mean and standard deviation of all the questions.

### Follow Up Analysis

The follow up section of the training program evaluated the dependent variable, which are quality jobs of the study. According to the data collected, the follow up looked assessed whether the participants had followed up after completing the training program, if progress was monitored in the follow up process, whether weekly contact was made, and which participants were referred to employers. Also, if participants were referred,

was follow up made to ensure contract of employers, how much time passed before obtaining a job, and what was the income obtained after completing the program. The data collected from the Atlanta Urban League Training and Workforce Development Program was insufficient to accurately evaluate if the participants are receiving quality jobs to adequately support their family. The data in the participants' files only stated that have received a job, but there was no additional information relating to the outcome results for this study. Due to insufficient data there was no reliability and statistical analyses used in this study.

### Summary

Presented in this chapter were the findings of this program evaluation. According to the data collected, there was insufficient data to accurately evaluate The Atlanta Urban League Training and Workforce development Program for obtaining quality jobs. The program failed to capture outcomes of participants that completed the program. The following chapter will discuss the findings and conclusions of this program evaluation.



## CHAPTER FIVE

### CONCLUSIONS

This chapter examines and discusses outcomes of the evaluation and the relevance of the findings. It emphasizes how the data collected was inconclusive in accurately evaluating the Atlanta Urban League (AUL) Training and Workforce Development program in providing a quality job after program completion. The limitations of the program evaluation are provided in this section.

This evaluation demonstrated the Atlanta Urban League Training and Workforce Development program outcomes in receiving a quality job after completion. Previous literature reported that the low-income population is not receiving quality jobs to appropriately support their families. According to Boushey (2001), wages are too low to enable families to escape poverty and avoid hardships.

According to the data collected, there was evidence that low-income population is utilizing the AUL training program to ensure improvement of their chances to receive quality employment. There were 29 participants that were walk-ins and 11 were referred to the agency for training. There were only 15% (6) participants out of the 40 files reviewed, which did not complete either of the AUL training programs. There was a baseline assessment on each participant that entered the program, but their current skills level for the Microsoft Office Specialist or the Financial Services and Proof Encoding was not assessed. The evaluation of this training program did not provide enough data to

substantiate that Atlanta Urban League Training and Workforce Development provide low-income participants with quality jobs after completion. The intake form captured limited demographic data. There was no follow-up data available on clients served during the observed time period. As a result of insufficient data, the evaluation could not sufficiently evaluate AUL training in providing low-income population quality jobs to properly take care of their families after completing the program.

The agency addresses the Afrocentric Perspective in their orientation process by educating participants' on the structure of AUL and discrimination in the workplace. African-Americans represent 97.5% of the participants that utilize the AUL training program. The agency specifically educates the participant on discrimination and explains issues that can occur in the workplace. The General System Theory, by Bertalanffy (2006), focuses on wholeness and interaction by viewing human behavior and focuses on the person and his/her total living situation. This process can help clients develop a more realistic understanding of the workplace. In addition, by understanding the individual and collective components of the programs of the Atlanta Urban League, clients are expected to improve their utility of its services and increase their ability to secure a job. Unfortunately, the absence of a viable management information system (MIS) did not allow this study to capture the follow up data needed to examine the internal and external functioning of the systems. The follow up data is required in order to evaluate this program.

### Limitation of the Study

There are several limitations to this study that need to be considered. The first limitation to study is the sample size. The sample size contained only 40 cases from one fiscal year. A larger sample size examined over the course time has the potential to provide more depth and accuracy in the long-term. Another limitation is the definition of quality employment. For this study; the definition of quality employment was defined through previous literature on quality jobs. It should be noted that the Atlanta Urban League has a different definition of quality employment; therefore, the data collected from the agency may misrepresent the study definition for quality employment.

According to the Atlanta Urban League, quality employment is defined by just having a job. Any job held by a participant will improve their circumstances (Atlanta Urban League Training Bulletin, 2006). A final limitation to consider is the insufficient follow up data collected by the agency. The AUL client files did not maintain consistent follow up data, ultimately, making the assessment of employment training and quality job outcomes impossible to determine.

### Summary

The results indicate that there is insufficient follow data to evaluate the program in providing quality employment for this low-income population. The study captured demographics and client assessments but no follow up data, which was a major limitation to the study. The next chapter provides recommendations for the agency on improving the follow up process to capturing this data.

## CHAPTER SIX

### IMPLICATIONS FOR SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE

This chapter discusses the recommendations and implications to social work practice on how to improve the Atlanta Urban League Training and Workforce Development program. As previously mentioned, there was not enough data captured to adequately evaluate the program where participants were receiving a quality job to properly support their families. Therefore, follow-up data is a major component at the agency in providing information on the participants that utilized the program. Monitoring follow up data for outcomes analysis is essential in addressing the needs of clients or to making improvements in measuring the success of the programs. Recommendations for new policy, its benefits and the impact it has on the social practice is displayed in this section.

Through the data collected, it clearly stated that low-income population in Metro Atlanta Georgia is utilizing the training services, which are provided to them. Also in collecting data, the Atlanta Urban League does not capture the marital status of the individuals; instead, they only asked for how many people were in the household. A family can be defined as being single or married. The marital status of participants was needed in order to verify the true representation of family size. Collecting marital status data allows the agency to see what income, if any, is coming into the household. This information can be added to the initial form.

Another piece of data that can be captured in the initial intake or prior to the training program is previous skill level or education level. The AUL does a career evaluation, which assesses what type of person fits a position. There was no evidence of the skill level the participants had upon entering the training program. Knowing the skill can provide new career avenues for the participant. For example, if a person currently does not previous computer experience they would have to start learning the basic concepts of the computer and the skills needed to operate one. Another participant may know more about a computer and there would be no need to educate them on these concepts. This way the agency will save money and time on unnecessary training and concentrate on the need of the participants at that time. This will also be a way to observe progress and efficiency of the training that is being provided.

In the data collection, the Atlanta Urban League fell short when it came to the follow up process. The evidence showed no follow up process done on the participants that attended the training program. According to the agency, the lack of appropriate staffing was the main issue for why follow up was not done on consistent basis. The agency stated on their case files that participants were employed, but no additional information about employment was provided. There are many ways the agency can capture this data.

In order to collect follow up data from participants, which is essential information, the AUL should have strong contact information. At the initial intake, the AUL should have asked for primary and secondary contact information. This information should be verified at each follow up contact. The agency could then document all contact

information on the Job Development Case Note form (see Appendix E). Follow up contact is done on a weekly basis until the participants receives employment after completion of the training program. After receiving a job, follow up is completed at 15, 30, 60 and 90 days. In addition to the job development case note, the case manager provides the participants with a Job Verification Form (see Appendix F) and release form (see Appendix G). These forms allow the agency to capture and verify employment data. Obtaining at least 60% of the participants with follow up data will give the agency a good representation that the follow up has been completed.

Funding is another issue the AUL faces. It does not maintain the budget to hire staff to follow up on the participants. Follow up is an important piece of the agency and the agency needs to capture this data in order to receive significant data on the programs. Since budget does not allow additional staffing, the AUL can utilize social work interns or volunteers. The interns demonstrate social work practice through direct contact with participants. The agency can use these interns and volunteers until they can receive adequate funding for permanent staffing to provide follow up services.

Finally, the agency can provide an alumni association. Alumni association can meet once a month at the agency. When participants attend the alumni meetings, the agency can verify contact information. The alumni association will be demonstrated like aftercare through which the agency will provide some kind of refresher course at each meeting. Areas that could be included are job readiness, life skills, money management, job search skills, resume writing, and all areas associated with finding and maintaining employment. This is an incentive for participants to attend, which ensures they are

receiving additional services provided by the agency. After tracking is in place, this permits the Atlanta Urban League to pursue and identify grant opportunities. Since grants are the source of the funding to the agency, follow up data will allow the AUL to present this data in order to receive money to expand the program and hire additional staff. The data collected can finally be analyzed to evaluate the program outcomes.

The Atlanta Urban League program evaluation impacts the social work practice in several ways. Cancian (2001) stated poor access to education and training, racism and other forms of discrimination, and local job market conditions are among the factors that limit employment opportunities. According to the evidence collected, the majority of the low-income population the AUL serves is African-Americans; therefore, the programs should be culturally competent to serve this population. Social workers need to know how to overcome barriers to employ African-Americans so they can obtain quality jobs that will keep them out of poverty. They should also understand the population they are serving which will assist them in providing proper services for the individuals. This will assist social workers in enhancing their communication skills with employers. The social worker should also learn to build partnerships with employers, so they can provide direct services in placing individuals with employers. Finally, follow up data will provide assistance in evaluating how the participants performed when attending training. Through this information, the social worker will know where the proper place to lead the participants in their job searches.

Additionally, maintaining a viable management information system will allow the social worker to advocate for new policies to assist the low-income population. Social

workers can develop new policies according to the outcomes of the program evaluation. Also, internships can be implemented by the social worker for the participants that lack work experience. This will allow participants to have a better chance in receiving quality jobs.

Policies on follow up procedures can be enforced. Through enforcement, social workers are provided with accurate data to present to show the need for improvement or expansion of the training program that AUL already has in place. While the AUL has training programs that provide the low-income population with the necessary skills to get a quality job, new policies can be implemented for programs such as life skills workshops. This will give the participants a chance learn how to money manage. Social workers can properly advocate for new policies for participants and the agency when they have the proper data to support their assessment.

More research is needed to add to this body of knowledge. Low-income population receiving quality jobs in order to adequately support their families through the Atlanta Urban League was not proven through this program evaluation. Recent research proved that low-income individuals are working, but not making enough to escape poverty. Research outcomes prove the importance of a quality job and are sufficient when it comes to escaping poverty. Identifying the outcomes can help with priorities for intervention development that will assist in overcoming barriers that restrict individuals from receiving quality jobs. Through research, new and improved training programs can be implemented to assist the low-income population escape poverty. Research also leads to helping make policies changes. Research outcomes display needs assessments of



where assistance is significantly beneficial the low-income population. In addition to analyzing outcome measures, research can analyze programs that have already been implemented. Agencies can look at the research and see if their program is actually benefiting the population they serve. Research plays a major role on how policies are created, programs implemented and resources are allocated.

## APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A:

## IRB APPROVAL LETTER



CLARK ATLANTA UNIVERSITY  
Institutional Review Board  
Office of Sponsored Programs

September 28, 2006

Ms. Kathaya Brown <[Kathaya\\_brown@yahoo.com](mailto:Kathaya_brown@yahoo.com)>  
School of Social Work  
Clark Atlanta University  
Atlanta, GA 30314

**RE:** The Effectiveness of Training and Workforce development in Improving  
Employment Outcomes Employability.

**Principal Investigator:** Kathaya Brown

**Human Subjects Code Number:** HR2006-08-184-1

Dear Ms. Brown:

The Human Subjects Committee of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) has reviewed your revised protocol and approved of it as expedited and exempt from full IRB review in accordance with 45 CFR 46.101b.2. You may begin your study one week from the date of this notice.

Protocol Approval Code is HR2006-08-184-1/A

This approval is valid for one year from the date of this notice. This permit will therefore expire on September 30, 2007. Thereafter, continued approval is contingent upon the annual submission of a renewal form to this office. Any reaction or problems resulting from this investigation should be reported immediately to the IRB, to the Department Chairperson and any sponsoring agency.

If you have any questions, please contact Dr. Georgiana Bolden at the Office of Sponsored Programs (404) 880-6979 or Dr. Paul I. Musey, (404) 880-6829.

Sincerely:

Paul I. Musey, Ph.D.  
Chair  
IRB: Human Subjects Committee

cc. Dr. Sarita Davis ([sdavis@cau.edu](mailto:sdavis@cau.edu))  
Office of Sponsored Programs, Dr. Georgiana Bolden ([gbolden@cau.edu](mailto:gbolden@cau.edu))

**APPENDIX B:**  
**SITE APPROVAL LETTER**

**To: The Atlanta Urban League, Training and Workforce Development Program**  
**From: Kathaya Brown, Master of Social Work Thesis Student, Clark Atlanta University**  
**Subject: Site Approval**

We, \_\_\_\_\_, give  
Kathaya Brown, MSW thesis student, permission to conduct an evaluation of the  
Training and Workforce development for the sole purpose of completing the degree  
requirement for the Master of Social Work at Clark Atlanta University. It is understood  
that Kathaya Brown will review the necessary documents to help her fulfill these  
requirements.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Evaluator

\_\_\_\_\_  
Program Representative

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**APPENDIX C:**  
**QUALITY JOB EVALUATION TOOL**

**Instruction:**

The following questions will evaluate the effectiveness of the training program for this study. The first section demonstrates participants' criteria and eligibility to participate in the Atlanta Urban League Training and Workforce Development program. The second section will provide demographics. The next section will display the client assessment. The final section will display follow up services. The evaluator will place a check to indicate the correct answer or fill in the answer where it is necessary.

<b>Quality Job Evaluation Tool</b>	<b>Response</b>
<b>Intake</b>	
1. Who made the referral to the agency? State walk in if there were no referral made.	<input type="checkbox"/> Walk in <input type="checkbox"/>
2. Agency criteria were illustrated to make this client eligible?	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. How was eligibility established?	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Demographics</b>	
4. Age	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Identity ethnic background.	<input type="checkbox"/> Black <input type="checkbox"/> Asian <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Caucasian <input type="checkbox"/> Other
6. Gender	<input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Male
7. Indicate what education level completed.	<input type="checkbox"/> Some school <input type="checkbox"/> High School <input type="checkbox"/> Bachelors <input type="checkbox"/> Masters <input type="checkbox"/> PHD <input type="checkbox"/> Trainings

8. Marital Status	<input type="checkbox"/> Single <input type="checkbox"/> Divorced <input type="checkbox"/> Married <input type="checkbox"/> Widow
9. What is family size?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/> 6 <input type="checkbox"/> 7 <input type="checkbox"/> 8 <input type="checkbox"/> 9 <input type="checkbox"/> More than 10
<b>Client Assessment</b>	
10. Has the individual worked in the last year prior the starting training program?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
11. What is the income at time of intake? Place amount if not zero.	<input type="checkbox"/> \$0 <input type="checkbox"/>
12. Is there any baseline assessment of client employment skills prior to entering the program?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
13. Does client have previous skills in Microsoft Offices?	<input type="checkbox"/> None <input type="checkbox"/> Low Skill Level <input type="checkbox"/> Moderate Skill Level <input type="checkbox"/> High Skills Level
14. Does client have previous skills in Financial Services and Proof Encoding?	<input type="checkbox"/> None <input type="checkbox"/> Low Skill Level <input type="checkbox"/> Moderate Skill Level <input type="checkbox"/> High Skills Level
15. Which program was completed? Microsoft Office Specialist (Mouse) or Financial Services and Proof Encoding (FSPE)	<input type="checkbox"/> Mouse <input type="checkbox"/> FSPE

16. What month was the program completed?	<input type="checkbox"/> January <input type="checkbox"/> February <input type="checkbox"/> March <input type="checkbox"/> April <input type="checkbox"/> May <input type="checkbox"/> June <input type="checkbox"/> July <input type="checkbox"/> August <input type="checkbox"/> September <input type="checkbox"/> October <input type="checkbox"/> November <input type="checkbox"/> December <input type="checkbox"/> Did not complete <input type="checkbox"/> Special Recognition
<b>Client Follow Up</b>	
17. Has there been a follow-up with client?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
18. Was the client's progress monitor in follow up?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
19. Was client contact made weekly?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
20. Was the client referred to employers after completion of trainings?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
21. If client was referred to employers, were referrals followed up to ensure that contact was made?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
22. How much time has passed since completing training before obtaining a job. Mark No Job if no job has been obtained.	<input type="checkbox"/> No Job <input type="checkbox"/>
23. Income after completed the training program and obtaining a job	<input type="checkbox"/>
24. What is the discussion relating to the environment and conditioning of training toward participants?	

## APPENDIX D:

## ITEM-LEVEL ANALYSIS

Item Level Analysis (N=40)

VARIABLE	Frequency	Mean	Standard Deviation
1. Who made the referral to the agency? State walk in if there were no referral made.	Walk in (29) Referred (11)	1.2750	.45220
2. Which agency criteria were illustrated to make this client eligible?	High School Diploma (37) GED (11)	1.0750	.26675
3. How was eligibility established?	Education (40)	1.0000	--
4. Age	18-29 (13) 30-39 (10) 40-49 (12) 50-59 (4) 60-69 (1)	35.9500	12.68544
5. Identity ethnic background.	Black (39) Asian (0) Hispanic (0) Caucasian (1) Other (0)	1.0750	.47434
6. Gender	Female (37) Male (3)	1.0750	.26675
7. Indicate what education level competed.	Some school (2) High School (33) Bachelors (5) Masters (0) PHD (0) Trainings (0)	2.0750	.41679
8. Marital Status	Single (0) Divorced (0) Married (0)	--	--



	Widow (0) Missing Data (40)		
9. What is family size?	1 (0) 2 (20) 3 (11) 4 (7) 5 (1) 6 (1) 7 (0) 8 (0) 9 (0) More than 10	2.8000	.99228
10. Has individual worked in the last year prior to starting training program?	Yes (25) No (12)	1.3243	.47458
11. What is the income at time of intake? Place in amount if not zero.	\$0 (25) \$200 (1) \$235 (1) \$280 (1) \$336 (1) \$340 (1) \$541 (1) \$564 (1) \$904 (1) \$1200 (2) \$1400 (1) \$1600 (1) Missing Data (3)	238.5135	444.88629
12. Is there any baseline assessment of client employment skills prior to entering program?	Yes (40) No (0)	1.0000	--
13. Does client have previous skills in Microsoft Offices?	None (0) Low Skill Level (0) Moderate Skill Level (0) High Skills Level (0) Missing Data (40)	-	-
14. Does client have previous skills in Financial Services and Proof Encoding?	None (0) Low Skill Level (0) Moderate Skill Level (0)	--	--

	High Skills Level (0) Missing Data (40)		
15. Which program was completed? Microsoft Office Specialist (Mouse) or Financial Services and Proof Encoding (FSPE)	Mouse (22) FSPE (17) Missing Data (1)	1.4359	.50236
16. What month was the program completed?	January (1) February (10) March (0) April (0) May (0) June (6) July (0) August (6) September (6) October (3) November (0) December (0) Did not complete (6) Special Recognition (2)	7.3750	4.10558
17. Has there been a follow-up with client	Yes (2) No (38) N/A (0) Missing Data (40)	1.0000	--
18. Was the client's progress monitor in follow up?	Yes (0) No (0) N/A (0) Missing Data (40)	--	--
19. Was client contact made weekly?	Yes (0) No (0) N/A (0) Missing Data (40)	--	--
20. Was the client referred to employers after completion of trainings?	Yes (0) No (0) N/A (0) Missing Data (40)	--	--

21. If client was referred to employers, were referrals followed up to ensure that contact was made?	Yes (0)	--	--
	No (0)		
	N/A (0)		
	Missing Data (40)		
22. How much time has passed since completing training before obtaining a job. Mark No if no job has been obtained.	No Job (0)	4.000	--
	4 month		
	Missing Data (39)		
23. Income after completion the training program and obtaining a job.	\$9.50 (1)	9.5000	--
	Missing Data		

## APPENDIX E:

## JOB DEVELOPMENT CASE NOTE

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Employment counselor: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## ❑ Contact Verification

## New Contact

**Information:**

### Type of Contact

☐ In Person

**☐ Phone**

**Notes:**

[illegible]

APPENDIX F:  
EMPLOYMENT VERIFICATION FORM

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Enter Into Training Program: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Completion: \_\_\_\_\_

Training Program

\_\_\_\_\_ MOUSE  
\_\_\_\_\_ FSPE

Employment Status

\_\_\_\_\_ Full Time  
\_\_\_\_\_ Part Time

Place of Employment: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Job Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Job Duties: \_\_\_\_\_

Start Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Hours: \_\_\_\_\_ Days: \_\_\_\_\_

Rate of Pay: \_\_\_\_\_

Pay Schedule: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

APPENDIX G:  
RELEASE FORM

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

I \_\_\_\_\_, give permission to the Atlanta Urban League Workforce Development and Training Program to contact my employer for employment verification. I understand the information is only used to verify my current employment. No other information will be asked of the employer. I certify that my consent for the release of this information is entirely voluntary.

Employer: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_

Verification

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Employment Counselor: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments:

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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